

Please amend the present application as follows:

Claims

The following is a copy of Applicant's claims that identifies language being added with underlining ("___") and language being deleted with strikethrough ("—"), as is applicable:

1. (Previously presented) A method for permitting a user to temporarily use a resource, comprising:

receiving user identity information with an external identity confirmation device of the resource prior to providing access to the resource;

receiving a user code with an external security device of the resource prior to providing access to the resource;

confirming the eligibility of the user to use the resource relative to the identity information and the user code;

providing the user with access to the resource;

monitoring and recording information about use of the resource with a monitoring system of the resource; and

obtaining resource use information from the resource monitoring system of the resource.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the user identity information is obtained from an identity card of the user.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the identity confirmation device comprises a card reader.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, further comprising cross-referencing the user identity information with information stored in a resource memory.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the security device comprises a keypad.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, further comprising cross-referencing the received user code with information stored in a resource memory.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising obtaining user identity and resource information once the user takes the resource.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the user identity and resource information is transmitted from the resource over a short-range wireless communications system.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the resource use information is obtained from the resource once the resource has been returned.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the resource use information is transmitted from the resource over a short-range wireless communications system.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the user is permitted to use the resource in exchange for a rental fee.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising providing a transaction summary to the user once the user terminates resource use.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising automatically billing the user once the resource is reacquired.

15. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising locating and retrieving the resource after the user has terminated resource use.

16. (Original) A method for permitting a user to temporarily use an automobile, comprising:

receiving identity information from a user identity card with a card reader provided on the exterior of the automobile;

receiving a user code with a security device provided on the exterior of the automobile;

unlocking the automobile doors in response to receiving a user code that correctly corresponds to the identity card; and

permitting the automobile engine to be started once the user identity card is received by a card reader located inside the automobile.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the user identity and automobile information is transmitted from the automobile to a central office over a short-range wireless communications system when the automobile is taken by the user.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising sensing and recording use conditions of the automobile with a vehicle monitoring system.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the vehicle monitoring system monitors the mileage driven and duration of use.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19, wherein the vehicle monitoring system further monitors the places where the automobile is taken in conjunction with a GPS device of the automobile.

21. (Original) The method of claim 16, further comprising obtaining automobile use information from the automobile upon reacquisition of the automobile.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the automobile use information is transmitted from the automobile over a short-range wireless communication system to a central office.

23. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the user is permitted to use the automobile in exchange for a rental fee.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising providing a transaction summary to the user upon receiving a use termination communication from the user.

25. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising automatically billing the user for use of the automobile upon receipt of the use termination communication.

26. (Original) The method of claim 23, further comprising locating and retrieving the automobile after the user has communicated termination of use.

27. (Previously presented) An access/monitoring system adapted for use in an automobile that can be made available for temporary use by a user, the system comprising:

- a central controller;

- an identity confirmation device provided on an exterior of the automobile that determines the identity of the user;

- a security device provided on an exterior of the automobile that confirms the identity of the user; and

- a monitoring system capable of recording use conditions of the automobile.

28. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the identify confirmation device comprises a card reader provided on the exterior of the automobile that reads information from a user identity card.

29. (Original) The system of claim 27, wherein the security device is a keypad provided on the exterior of the automobile that accepts user code information from the user.

30. (Original) The system of claim 27, further comprising a communications system that transmits information to and receives information from a central office.

31. (Original) The system of claim 27, further comprising a display device that communicates information to the user.

32. (Original) The system of claim 27, further comprising a printing device that provides the user with a summary of use information.

33. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein providing a transaction summary comprises printing out a hard copy of the transaction using a printing device of the resource.

34. (New) The method of claim 24, wherein providing a transaction summary comprises printing out a hard copy of the transaction using a printing device within the automobile.

35. (New) A method for permitting a user to use an automobile, comprising:

receiving identity information from a user identity card with a card reader provided on the exterior of the automobile;

cross-referencing the received identity information to verify the user's authorization to enter the automobile;

unlocking an automobile door at least in part in response to verifying the user's authorization from the received identity information; and

permitting the automobile engine to be started once the same user identity card is read by a card reader located inside the automobile.

36. (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising transmitting the user identity and automobile information from the automobile to a central office when the automobile is taken by the user.

37. (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising sensing and recording use conditions of the automobile with a vehicle monitoring system.

38. (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising obtaining automobile use information from the automobile upon reacquisition of the automobile.

39. (New) The method of claim 35, further comprising printing a transaction summary using a printer within the automobile upon receiving a use termination communication from the user.

40. (New) The method of claim 39, further comprising automatically billing the user for use of the automobile upon receipt of the use termination communication.

41. (New) An access/monitoring system adapted for use in an automobile, the system comprising:

a central controller;

an identity confirmation device provided on an exterior of the automobile that is configured to read a user identity from a user identification card before enabling the user to enter the automobile; and

an identity confirmation device provided within the interior of the automobile that is configured to read the user identity from the same user identification card before enabling an engine of the automobile to be started.

42. (New) The system of claim 41, wherein the identify confirmation devices comprise separate card readers provided on the exterior and within the interior of the automobile, respectively.

43. (New) The system of claim 41, further comprising a communications system that transmits information to and receives information from a central office.

44. (New) The system of claim 41, further comprising a display device that communicates information to the user.

45. (New) The system of claim 41, further comprising a printing device that provides the user with a summary of use information.